

**United States Consulate General  
1075 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, Canada**

**ALL APPLICANTS** for any type of visa **must first make an appointment** (except for eligible applicants opting to use mail-in program, A, G and diplomats). **Most visas will be processed in two work days.** However, your application may be refused or be delayed by unforeseen processing requirements. **DO NOT** make irrevocable travel plans prior to obtaining your visa!!

**STEP 1 – THE APPOINTMENT**

You may make an appointment using one of the following methods:

- [www.nvars.com](http://www.nvars.com) (flat rate \$9.50 CDN)
- Calling from Canada 1-900-451-2778 (\$1.89 CDN /minute)
- Calling from U.S.A 1-900-443-3131 (\$1.89 USD / minute)
- Credit Card 1-888-840-0032 (CDN/min charge)

The 900 numbers listed may be blocked from hotels, offices, and pay phones. The credit card line is more widely accessible.

**STEP 2 – THE APPLICATION FORM**

- The DS-156 must be filled out online at <http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/forms.html> for each applicant (including family members traveling on a single passport). **Hand-written DS-156 applications are no longer being accepted.** Please note that you must print all pages including the barcode page on the last page which contains all the information you entered on the online DS-156. Completion of the DS-156 online will ensure processing of your application more quickly.
- All males ages 16-45 must also **fully complete form DS-157.** Additionally, all applicants 16 or older who are nationals, natives or permanent residents of Cuba, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan or Syria must complete **form DS-157.**
- For photo requirements visit the following site: <http://www.usconsulatevancouver.ca/content/content.asp?section=visas&document=index>. Glue it to the front of the DS-156.
- Sign and date the application form.

**Note: You are personally responsible for your answers.**

**Providing false information on a visa application is grounds for permanent exclusion from the United States.**

**STEP 3 – REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

- **Valid passport** (or official travel document for stateless persons or refugees). The passport should be valid for at least 6 months past your intended stay in the United States. Applicant's name in the passport must be in Latin Letters (English). Damaged, invalid or altered passports will not be accepted.
- **Proof of status in CANADA:** "Maple Leaf" permanent resident card or original Canadian student, employment, visitor or Minister's Permit authorization.
- If you are renewing a visa that has not yet expired, you **MUST** provide the passport containing the prior visa, if available. It is strongly recommended that you also bring any other current or expired passports, containing previously issued U.S. visas.
- Most applicants must be able to show strong commitments to a home outside the U.S. Therefore, you should submit evidence of economic and social ties to your home country, such as bank letters or statements, property title or rental agreements, proof of car ownership, etc. If you are currently employed, provide a signed and dated letter from your employer stating your position, job title, salary and the date you started working. If you are currently a student, provide a signed and dated letter from your school indicating dates of enrollment and course of study. Depending on the purpose of your trip, you should also submit the following:
  - o **For business:** a signed and dated letter from your employer confirming sponsorship of your trip, a detailed itinerary,

including client contact information, and a detailed description of your intended activities while in the U.S.

- o **For study** ("F" and "M" visas): a completed Form I-20 and proof of funds to cover tuition and expenses. All "F" and "M" applicants, including dependents, must also complete a form DS-158.
- o **For exchange visitors** ("J" visas): a completed Form DS-2019. All "J" applicants, including dependents, must also complete a form DS-158.
- o **For "H", "L", "O", "P" and "Q" visas:** original approval notice form I-797A or B (I-797C is NOT acceptable). A copy of the complete I-129 petition package used to obtain this approval is highly recommended.

**NOTE:** All "F" "M" and "J" applicants must ensure that their sponsoring institution has electronically confirmed their participation through the Department of Homeland Security's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), and for those applicants with I-20 or DS-2019 forms with an issue date of **September 1, 2004** or later **must pay the SEVIS fee** before applying for their visas. Persons with I-20/DS-2019 forms issued before that date are not subject to the SEVIS fee regardless of when they apply for their visa. Persons sponsored by the U.S. Federal Government are exempt from payment of the fee. The **Consular Section** will be responsible for verifying that the SEVIS fee has been paid but **will not be responsible for collecting it.**

Canadians who are exempt from the visa requirement will have to provide SEVIS fee payment verification along with their I-20/DS-2019 Form to a Department of Homeland Security inspector at the port of entry when applying for entry into the United States as an F, J or M visitor.

For further details, please visit the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Student and Exchange Visitor Program website: <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/news/newsreleases/articles/SEVISFactSheet.htm>

**STEP 4 – FEES**

- A \$100.00 non-refundable application fee is required for every applicant. U.S. funds only and in exact change (no coins).
- There may be a separate **reciprocity fee** charged for your approved visa, depending on your nationality, place of residence and type of visa being issued. For further details please inquire with the telephone numbers provided, or visit: <http://travel.state.gov/visa/reciprocity/index.htm>.

**STEP 5 – PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

All applicants **must appear in person for their visa appointment.** This requirement may only be waived for applicants with appointments who are **landed immigrants in Canada under 14 or over 79 years of age**, although these applicants **must be physically present** in B.C. or the Yukon at the time of the appointment.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a translator if lacking adequate English language skills.

**APPLICATIONS THAT FAIL TO MEET THE ABOVE  
REQUIREMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. IN ALL CASES,  
THE CONSUL MAY REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR  
DOCUMENTATION BEFORE MAKING A FINAL DECISION ON  
YOUR APPLICATION.**

## A VISA DOES NOT GUARANTEE ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES!!

The Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has authority to deny admission at a U.S. port of entry. Also, the period for which the bearer of a visa is authorized to remain in the United States is determined by the CBP, not the consular officer. At that time, if authorized, an arrival/departure record (form I-94), which notes the length of stay permitted, is validated. Those visitors who wish to stay beyond the date indicated on their Form I-94 must contact the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to request an extension. The decision to grant or deny this request is made solely by the USCIS.

### DO YOU NEED A VISA?

If you are not a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, you must first obtain a U.S. visa before entering the United States for any purpose, with the following exceptions:

1) **If you are a CANADIAN CITIZEN**, you do **not** need a visa to enter the United States for any purpose other than those in diplomatic status ("A" and "G" visas), as a treaty trader or investor ("E" visas), as a fiancé(e) or spouse of an American citizen intending to apply for permanent residency in the United States ("K" visas), or for permanent residency (immigrant visas). Except for the categories described above, all Canadian citizens must apply for permission to enter the United States directly at the port of entry to a CBP inspector. Please note that certain entry categories (e.g. H1B temporary employment) require advance authorization from USCIS.

2) The **VISA WAIVER PROGRAM (VWP)** enables citizens of participating countries to travel to the U.S. for tourism or business for 90 days or less without obtaining a U.S. visa.

**The following countries currently participate in the Visa Waiver Program:** Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

To enter the U.S. on the Visa Waiver Program, travelers from participating countries must:

- Have a valid **machine-readable** passport issued by the participating country and be a citizen (not merely a resident) of that country. Passports issued after October 25, 2005, which are not **biometrically** enabled will not be valid for travel to the United States without a visa.
- Be seeking entry for 90 days or less as a temporary visitor.
- Have a round-trip transportation ticket issued on a carrier that has signed an agreement with the U.S. Government to participate in the VWP, and arrive in the United States aboard such a carrier.
- Have proof of financial solvency.
- Not have violated the conditions of any previous admission to the U.S.

**Note:** Travelers who apply for entry at a land border are not required to present round-trip transportation tickets or arrive at the border entry point aboard a carrier who has signed an agreement with the U.S. to participate in the VWP. All other VWP requirements apply to such travelers.

**Note:** Travelers previously denied visas, or entry into the United States under the VWP, are ineligible to enter the U.S. on the Visa Waiver Program. Certain criminal records and other statutory grounds for exclusion under U.S. immigration law may also render an applicant ineligible for the Visa Waiver Program.

### VISAS BY MAIL

- 1) The option to apply for a visa by mail is **only** available to landed immigrants in Canada **under 14 or over 79 years of age** applying for visitor visas (B1/B2) who have been resident as landed immigrants in Canada for a minimum of 6 months. Please note that citizens, nationals, natives or permanent residents of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria are not eligible for the mail-in program regardless of age or landed status in Canada.
- 2) To use the mail-in program, please complete your application in accordance with instructions in steps 2 and 3 of this form.
- 3) Please provide a **money order** payable to the "U.S. Consulate General" for US\$100 per application.
- 4) Mail your completed application, your passport, money order and supporting documents, along with a pre-paid, self-addressed envelope to:

**Visa Unit, U.S. Consulate General  
1075 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, BC V6E 2M6**

- 5) Please allow up to one month for processing of your application by mail. Your passport will be returned to you in the stamped, self-addressed envelope you provide. It is recommended to use registered mail service. If you fail to provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope, your visa application will be subject to considerable delay. It is your responsibility to send your application to the Consulate General far enough in advance of your intended trip for processing and mailing.
- 6) The Consulate General assumes no responsibility for passports or documents sent by mail.

**Note:** All applicants, regardless of age, must be present in the consular district (British Columbia and the Yukon) at the time of the application.

### QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions pertaining to any of this information please phone 1-900-451-2778 from Canada or 1-900-443-3131 from the United States (per minute toll charges will apply). You may also visit the following websites for additional information:

#### U.S. Mission Canada:

<http://www.usembassycanada.gov>  
<http://www.amcits.com>

#### State Department:

<http://www.travel.state.gov/>

#### U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS):

<http://uscis.gov/graphics/index.htm>

#### Customs & Border Protection (CBP):

<http://www.cbp.gov/>

#### U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE):

<http://www.ice.gov/graphics/index.htm>